No. 56 dated 18.10.2004. The issue of further tightening the regime for screening consignments of metallic scrap is under the consideration of the Committee of Secretaries.

Negotiations with Gulf Cooperation Council

3068. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister authorized the Commerce and External Affairs Ministries to initiate negotiations with the Gulf Cooperation Council to conclude a Free Trade Agreement (FTA);

(b) whether the Prime Minister has pointed out that the Gulf region like South East and South Asia, is part of our natural economic hinterland and so we must pursue closer economic relations with all our neighbours;

(c) if so, whether both Commerce and External Affairs Minister visited these countries and had reached agreement; and

(d) if so, the details of the same and by when they are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) The Trade and Economic Relations Committee, headed by the Prime Minister, has decided that the Department of Commerce may proceed with negotiating a Free Trade Agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Earthquake Resistant Constructions

3069. SHRI VIJAY J.DARDA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that traditional structures in many regions of India have strong earthquake resistant features as compared to post multi-storied complexes;